

**CASCADIA CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR DISTRICT MEETING
Zoom Meeting ID: 987 6961 1557
14 N Mission St.
Wenatchee, WA 98801
Friday, April 21, 2023**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Junell Wentz, Chair; Amy Bridges, Auditor; Kurt Hosman, Member; M. Pete Teigen, Member.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dillon Miller, Vice Chair.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mike Baden, WSCC; Frank Curtin, NRCS; Ryan Baye, WACD; and the following District staff: Ryan Williams, Valerie Hampton, Joe Hill, and Nada Wentz. Attendees were present in person and via Zoom.

Junell Wentz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

Consent Agenda: Approve the March 17 Regular District Meeting minutes, approve the March Treasurer’s Report and authorize payment of bills. Approve Treasurer’s Report date corrections for the following minutes:

- Dec. 17, 2021 Min. & December Treasurer’s Report, approved at 1/21/22 Mtg *(was Nov)*
- Sept. 16, 2022 Min. & Sept. Treasurer’s Report, approved at 10/21/22 Mtg *(was Aug)*
- Dec. 16, 2022 Min. & Dec. Treasurer’s Report, approved at 1/20/22 Mtg *(was Nov)*
- Jan. 20, 2023 Min. & January Treasurer’s Report, approved at 2/17/23 Mtg *(was Dec)*

M/S/C Amy moved and Kurt seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. (Unanimous)

CORRESPONDENCE: None

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) REPORT: Frank Curtin

Frank and Joe have been working on the six pre-approvals from the first Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) signup round. The applications should be ready to send in for final approval in a couple of weeks. There will be a meeting on May 9 or 10 to discuss the new RCPP proposals. Frank will contact us as to which day it will be.

The Local Working Group meeting in Chelan went well. The turnout was pretty good although it has been better in past years.

The Inflation Reduction Act is set to rank Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) applications by the first of May. The next two months will be busy with site visits for these applications.

Frank gave a brief report, as requested at the last Board meeting, about EQIP projects and chipping for orchardists as an alternative to burning.

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION (WSCC) REPORT: Mike Baden

Kirk Robinson is the newly appointed Interim Director. The Commission is moving forward with the hiring process to permanently fill the position. The State Budget should be coming out tomorrow.

There are several items out for comment right now, including year-end funding. Comments on items that are particular to Cascadia should be included. Mike encouraged the district to take advantage of the year-end funding, which may be about \$20,000 for each district. He also asked to be informed as soon as possible if there are any planned returns of grant funding.

Ryan noted that some SRF funds have already been returned, and another project will likely be canceled. Staff are reviewing the costs for an ongoing project that may need some of the canceled funds allocated to it due to price increases since the agreement was signed. He will update Mike next week when the numbers are available.

End of the year reports are coming up, as well as final grant vouchers. Mike and Pete will try to meet and chat at WADE.

WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS (WACD) REPORT: Ryan Baye

Ryan Baye gave an update about the Legislative matters concerning conservation districts. The technical side of things is not known yet, but the Natural Resource Investments (NRI) funding remains at the same level as last year. Funding for riparian work looks good. Operating budget news won't come out until tomorrow. Sunday is the last day for the legislators to take action during this session. There is some concern about the farm bill funding at the Federal level.

Grant Application and Contract Review and Approval

Ryan presented the information for the Board's consideration.

M/S/C Kurt moved and Pete seconded to approve the following Grant applications, Contracts and Landowner Cost Share agreements:

Grant Applications

Natural Resources Conservation Service for underserved producer outreach, youth education, community group engagement;

Conservation Commission for computer equipment, cargo trailer, storage shed, other miscellaneous equipment and staff time needs;

Grants and Services

Department of Ecology for funding to host two free dump days at multiple locations in the county;

Trout Unlimited to complete the design of the Cutler Fish Passage project;

Trout Unlimited to provide assistance to Trout Unlimited, Cascade Fisheries and the Forest Service on Beaver Dam Analog implementation on US Forest Service land;

ILA/MOUs / MOAs / Contracts

City of Wenatchee agreement to allow continued management of the native plant garden at Saddle Rock;

C6 Forest to Farm MOU for Cascadia to work with C6 to connect with forestry contractors for

the purpose of developing a steady source of biochar feedstock;

Landowner Agreements / Cost Share:

Alex Roberts - BDA installation, buffer and fence;

Yonaka – WSCC Fire Recovery - cancel fencing project;

Gumbardo – WSCC SRF - cancel riparian planting project;

Klumper – WSCC SRF - cancel riparian planting and BDA installation;

Naismith – FEMA - thinning with pile burning project;

Joe Roberts – WSCC Community Wildfire Resilience – forest thinning work by NW Youth Corps;

Doug Stevenson – WSCC Community Wildfire Resilience – forest thinning work by NW Youth Corps. (Unanimous)

OTHER BUSINESS

Building Update: The lease contract for the new office space is close to signature stage. However, the lease with the current building owners does not end until February 2024. There is no option to end the lease earlier. The new office space folks are good with us moving in later than August. Ryan and the Board briefly discussed other options, but agreed it is better to finish the current lease agreement with Wapato Real Property.

Prescribed Burn Association Events and Next Steps: Joe Hill reported on the prescribed burn training he recently attended in California. He talked about developing a burn plan; setting parameters regarding weather conditions; risk management, layers of separation, layers of protection for liability, and conversations with landowners covering the expectations of the burn boss and the landowner.

Cascadia's role would be to write prescribed fire plans and coordinate events for folks to learn from. Ryan worked with an attorney regarding the liability insurance needs and the verbiage to use in the landowner agreement terms.

Frank Curtin, NRCS, is looking into dry hydrant use in Washington State. They are used in the Midwest and have been beneficial.

Ryan asked the Board to approve a landowner agreement with Wes Johns to hold a Learn and Burn event on his property.

M/S/C Amy moved and Kurt seconded to approve an agreement with Wes Johns for a Learn and Burn event. (Unanimous)

Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Plan of Work: Minor changes were made for the 2024 annual plan of work. Ryan updated the website component to reflect the lack of progress. Ryan would like to push the project faster, pending how things roll out with the State Budget. Ryan asked if there were any questions, concerns or changes the Board would like to see. The Board will be asked to approve the plan at the May meeting.

Executive Director's Report: Ryan asked the Board if there were any questions regarding his email about the chipping program needs and planting projects. He discussed temporary options to rent a ½ ton truck to pull the chipper, and the long-term fix of purchasing a truck to pull the chipper, as well as what funding to use.

Other District concerns that year end funding could help with include problems with computers which may be caused by an aging ethernet switch; a canopy for the truck or a cargo trailer for locking up equipment when not in use; and other random equipment needs.

Annual Financial Report: Valerie asked for Board Member volunteers to assist in the review of the Schedule 22 Report, which is an annual internal audit. Junell and Pete volunteered to review the report. Kurt volunteered to be a backup person.

Washington Association of District Employees (WADE) Training: The early bird registration is due today for the June 12-14 training. Ryan asked if any of the Board members would like to attend. Most of the staff will be attending this year. He requested that he be approved to stay on site rather than commuting daily to allow him time to connect with other district folks at evening events during the training.

M/S/C Pete moved and Amy seconded to approve on-site registration for Ryan at the WADE training.
(Unanimous)

Conservation Commission: An Entiat couple corresponded with the Commission that they would like to name Cascadia Conservation District as a beneficiary in their will. It may be that the money would pass through the Commission for distribution to the District.

May 2023 Meeting Date and Agenda: The next Regular meeting is May 19, 2023, at 1:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 3:36 p.m.

Summary of Official Actions:

Approved the Consent Agenda;

Approved the following Grant applications, Contracts and Landowner Cost Share agreements:

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Naismith – FEMA - thinning with pile burning project;
Joe Roberts – WSCC Community Wildfire Resilience – forest thinning work by NW Youth
Corps;
Doug Stevenson – WSCC Community Wildfire Resilience – forest thinning work by NW Youth
Corps;
Approved an agreement with Wes Johns for a Learn and Burn event;
Approved on-site registration for Ryan at the WADE training.

CHAIR _____

OFFICE ASSISTANT _____